

# **Canals collection**

## **S1494**

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September 17, 2013

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Indiana State Library  
Rare Books and Manuscripts  
140 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
317-232-3671

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Indiana State Library
<b>Creator</b>	Ault, Lee
<b>Title</b>	Canals collection
<b>Date</b>	1849-1941; undated
<b>Extent</b>	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Folder]</b>	S1494

### Preferred Citation

Canals collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

## Historical Note

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Indiana built three canals, the Central Canal, part of the Wabash and Erie Canals, and part of the Whitewater Canal.

The northern part of the Central Canal begins in Broad Ripple and ends in downtown Indianapolis. It was originally designed to connect to the Wabash and Erie Canal with Evansville, a Whitewater extension near Muncie, "Cross-Cut" canal from Terre Haute to Worthington, a Madison railroad and the Michigan and National roads in Indianapolis.

"A canal from Terre Haute to Evansville authorized 1846. Maysville Division along White River was over 23 miles long from Newberry through Owl Prairie (now Elnora) to Maysville; part of it paralleled what is now S.R. 57. Contracts were let June 1849. Construction was delayed by cholera outbreaks among workers, many of whom were Irish immigrants. Navigation between Newberry and Maysville opened June 1852. By 1853, Wabash and Erie Canal, America's longest at approximately 460 miles, linked Lake Erie at Toledo, Ohio with Ohio River at Evansville. By 1860, most of [the] southern section [was] no longer used because of repair costs and railroad competition. Entire canal in Indiana sold at auction [in] 1876."

Only nine miles of the Central Canal was finished and cost overruns and revenue shortfalls caused the state to default on its interest payments. The Central Canal was sold to private parties to retire some debt. It was then sold to the Indianapolis Water Company which deeded the section south of 20th street to Indianapolis, which has developed it into a downtown pedestrian park.

The Whitewater Canal was planned to run from Laurel to Lawrenceburg. Thirty-one miles was built before the canal project was abandoned by the state due to debt.

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection includes text written by Lee Ault and L.S. Bowman ranging from 1900 to 1941 regarding Indiana canals, particularly the Whitewater and Central Canals.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged chronologically.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Indiana State Library

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

### Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a donation.

### Accruals

No further additions are expected.

### Processing Information

Collection processing completed 2013/09/10 by Edythe Huffman. EAD finding aid created 2013/09/10 by Edythe Huffman.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- Griffith's Western Line.

**Geographic Name(s)**

- Central Canal (Ind.)
- Whitewater Canal (Ind. and Ohio)

**Personal Name(s)**

- Bowman, L.S.

**Subject(s)**

- Canals

## Collection Inventory

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Griffith's Western Line business card, 1849

Central Canal document, undated

The Whitewater Canal documents, undated

Explanatory notes, undated